

Case Study



Newborough: Building collaborative partnerships to address community challenges



Key words: PSB, traffic management, place-based approach, drop-in sessions

What's been happening in Newborough?

A popular tourist destination on Anglesey, Newborough has faced growing traffic congestion and parking pressures as visitor numbers increased. The Gwynedd and Môn Public Services Board took on the challenge through a collaborative approach, bringing together PSB member organisations, community representatives, local businesses and residents. A hackathon event and engagement survey helped partners understand community perspectives by holding conversations in their own spaces. Regular drop-in sessions where anyone could discuss anything built trust and mutual respect between all parties. Community representation on the PSB working group moved the partnership towards genuine involvement and co-productive decision-making, creating hope for lasting solutions to longstanding problems. The partnership now aims to go beyond short-term visitor management, developing a 10-year plan for sustainable community wellbeing, economy and environment - and a replicable model for other Welsh communities.

Start date

End 2023 / early 2024

Key parties

PSB Member Organisations:

- Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
- Cyngor Gwynedd and Anglesey Council (local authorities)
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Fire and rescue services
- Medrwn Môn
- North Wales Police (invited partner)

Community/local:

- Newborough residents
- Local businesses
- Community groups (Aberffraw and Llyn Parc Mawr)
- Local councillors

Support/facilitation:

- Co-production Network for Wales (Project Dewi)
- Local engagement specialist (survey)



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Background: “We live on a crossroads”

Newborough (Niwbwrch) is situated in the southern corner of the Isle of Anglesey. The area is known for spectacular dunes, golden beaches, coastal forests and Llanddwyn Island, drawing visitors year-round to its nationally significant nature reserve.

It has always been a popular destination for holiday makers. Visitor numbers have grown significantly in recent decades, driven by social media exposure and targeted promotion - such as Manchester Airport highlighting it as an easily accessible destination. The increased visitor numbers have brought traffic gridlock and parking pressures, frustrating residents who have to endure the chaos.

The area presents complex land management challenges. The nature reserve is a Special Area of Conservation site balancing recreation, tourism, environmental protection and biodiversity priorities. Coastal management has shifted from engineered defences to dynamic dune management, natural coastal processes - but this means the landscape is constantly changing, and the existing car park is slowly being lost to erosion.

Meanwhile, the village itself struggles economically despite the tourism on its doorstep. Traffic congestion means visitors rarely stop in Newborough, driving straight through to the beach car park. The local shop and pub try to attract visitors but lack the parking needed to draw people in, leaving this economically deprived community unable to benefit from the thousands passing through.

Responsibility for the area is split across multiple organisations: Natural Resources Wales (NRW) manages the nature reserve, forest and car park with forestry and conservation priorities, while the local authority handles the roads. This has resulted in a fragmented, piecemeal approach to the complex issue - and made it an ideal challenge for the Gwynedd and Môn Public Services Board (PSB) to tackle through a structured, collaborative approach, connecting stakeholders and communities to address the problem holistically.

A Public Services Board is a partnership of public bodies in each local authority area, mandated by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to work together to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of their local communities. Key members include the local authorities, health board, fire and rescue services, and Natural Resources Wales, with invited partners like North Wales Police and Medrwn Môn (representing voluntary groups).



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What has been done?

The PSB set up a working group, or sub-committee, to examine the challenge as a whole.

A 'hackathon' was held as a kick-off event in Spring 2024, which brought together local residents and businesses with stakeholder organisations. While residents had attended many meetings with individual organisations in the past, this was the first time all the key actors - NRW, the council, residents and businesses - were in the room together. Previously, separate discussions had reached dead ends when each organisation pointed to issues beyond their jurisdiction, such as the council citing the car park or NRW citing the roads. The recommendations from the hackathon were taken forward.

Site visit

In November 2024, stakeholders visited the sites together - including service providers and a local councillor representing the community. Seeing the locations first-hand shifted perspectives: this wasn't just about Newborough village, but the neighbouring communities and access routes too. Walking the ground revealed practical constraints that hadn't been obvious in meetings - potential car park sites that looked viable on maps proved problematic in reality due to hazards, access issues, or the distance and danger of walking along roads without footpaths.

The group spoke directly with NRW staff stationed at the car park barrier during summer months, hearing their insights from managing daily pressures. Various options were explored: a park and ride system, smaller satellite car parks in the village charging lower fees than the main site, or relocating the car park entirely and promoting active travel options from the local Sustainable Travel Plan.

Rather than committing to one solution, the approach has been to learn by prototyping. In summer 2025, a park and ride scheme was trialled using a local business's car park to test viability and acceptance.

Drop-in sessions

Since late 2024, NRW has held regular drop-in sessions at the Pritchard Jones Institute in Newborough, with staff present on set days and an open-door policy. While visits were slow initially, attendance has grown as word spread about the informal conversations happening there.

The sessions have become a valuable forum for dialogue. All available NRW staff attend, often joined by representatives from other PSB member organisations. This gives residents easy access to ask questions, and provides local groups and businesses with a one-stop opportunity to coordinate with all relevant parties - whether planning road closures for a funeral, organising a park run, or ensuring events are run smoothly without unanticipated problems. The sessions have attracted high-profile visitors including local MPs and MSs, council and police leaders, as well as community police officers - demonstrating their significance both locally and more widely.

The drop-ins have built trust and mutual respect between the community and PSB members. Open discussions happen without concern about information being sensationalised or leaked - creating space for honest dialogue where the community feels involved in decisions, and PSB partners feel their efforts are recognised and valued.



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What else happened next

The PSB working group created a 10-year Community Development Plan with the following vision: "A thriving village at the heart of a sustainable visitor destination, where local people shape the future, protect the environment, celebrate culture and Welsh language, and benefit from inclusive opportunities for work, wellbeing, and belonging."

The working group reviewed member policies and other relevant sources to ensure the 10-year plan aligned with existing strategic commitments and was grounded in evidence. These included NRW policies, Anglesey County Council wellbeing and spatial planning, Medrwn Môn's Community Alliances, census and deprivation data, the 2024 Hackathon, and PSB profiles.

The PSB commissioned a survey, with a local engagement specialist talking to residents and businesses, leading to a summary report and an action plan which is being implemented.

Local community groups from Aberffraw and Llyn Parc Mawr joined the PSB working group, which ensured the inclusion of the local community's voice in discussions and decision making. They are now an important part of the PSB working group.

The day rate for parking at the beach was upped from £7.50 to £15.00 as a result of the PSB working group's findings. (Residents of Anglesey and Gwynedd can get an annual pass for £35, and there is a separate free residents' car park.)



Early impact

When protests emerged in spring 2025, they quickly subsided as residents recognised genuine progress was being made. Feedback from community representatives and police confirmed that people felt "the powers that be are working with them to do something" - a significant shift in perception.

While the complex traffic and parking issues remain several years from full resolution, there has been a marked change in how the partnership operates. All voices are now present in decision-making, creating a collaborative approach that offers real hope of lasting solutions - something all parties can take pride in. Given these are longstanding, historical problems, another few years to resolution is reasonably swift - once the way of working was established, it's been quite quick.

Previously, meetings focused heavily on governance and scrutinising every detail. Now, with trust built between partners, strategic decisions are made collectively at committee level, while operational groups handle implementation details and report back. This shift has freed the partnership to focus on outcomes rather than process.

Ways of working

The Newborough project is a model for community involvement with PSB work, and this collaborative approach is now influencing how the PSB tackles other challenges.

The spirit of partnership has extended beyond traffic and parking. Anglesey Council's trauma-informed training was opened to all PSB members, raising awareness across organisations that might not have considered it directly relevant - and prompting several to commission context-specific training for their teams. Six core PSB organisations have signed a healthy travel charter, with others planning to endorse it.

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The PSB has also begun working directly with young people at a local Further Education college, with plans to extend to three more campuses. Students raised practical issues like coordination between emergency services and the college during Britannia Bridge closures in adverse weather. Having all stakeholders in the room sparked enthusiastic responses - "we could solve this really quickly" - demonstrating how collaboration accelerates action. The PSB now plans to include young people as formal representatives in the future.

Challenges

The partnership has overcome significant challenges including fragmented responsibility across stakeholder organisations and a lack of trust between the community and authorities. Previously, there was no forum for informal dialogue between all parties, with siloed decision-making trapped in governance-heavy meetings. Community protests and frustration reflected the absence of any community voice in PSB working group discussions - barriers that have now been addressed through the collaborative approach.



The shift: From "we can't solve this because it's not our jurisdiction" to "we can work together to tackle whatever comes up" - though the practical traffic/parking solutions are still years away from full implementation.



There will always be new challenges, but the collaborative spirit means the partnership can tackle whatever emerges. Perfection isn't the goal - adaptability and working together are.

Key learning

Why is this co-production?

Assets

Community knowledge and lived experience were valued through the hackathon, engagement survey and site visits, with community groups becoming equal partners on the PSB working group. Organisational expertise was leveraged by bringing together different bodies' specific skills and jurisdictions - including frontline NRW staff's practical insights. Local resources like the Pritchard Jones Institute and a business car park were used for drop-ins and prototyping. The fundamental shift was from seeing fragmented responsibility as a barrier to seeing diverse expertise and community knowledge as collective assets for problem-solving.



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Networks

The PSB working group created a network connecting previously siloed organisations - NRW, councils, police, and community groups - who now make strategic decisions collectively. Regular drop-in sessions became hubs where residents, businesses, local groups, and multiple PSB partners could coordinate informally on anything from funeral road closures to park runs. The collaborative spirit extended beyond Newborough, with PSB members now sharing trauma-informed training, developing a healthy travel charter together, and working jointly with young people across multiple college campuses. From organisations each pointing to issues beyond their jurisdiction, they have developed into a connected network where mutual support enables partners to tackle challenges together regardless of who "owns" the problem.

Outcomes

The partnership focused on what mattered to residents - reducing daily traffic chaos, enabling the village to benefit economically from tourism, and feeling heard in decisions affecting their community. When protests emerged in spring 2025, they quickly subsided because people recognised genuine progress was happening - a significant shift from frustration to hope. Early outcomes include community representatives feeling "the powers that be are working with them," increased parking fees that better manage visitor pressure while protecting local residents, and the establishment of trust that enables ongoing adaptation.

Relationships

Trust built through the open-door drop-in sessions where honest dialogue could happen without fear of information being sensationalised, and through bringing all stakeholders to visit sites together rather than discussing them separately. The network has shifted from formal governance structures to trusting relationships where operational groups can act quickly and report back. Power is shared by including community group representatives as equal participants in the PSB working group. The partnership demonstrates reciprocity - the community feels their input shapes decisions, while PSB partners feel their efforts are recognised and valued. There is mutual respect, with all voices present in decision-making - and responsibility genuinely shared.

Catalysts

The PSB's role shifted from trying to solve problems on behalf of the community to creating spaces and structures that enabled collective problem-solving. The hackathon, engagement survey and drop-in sessions gave residents, businesses and community groups platforms to voice concerns, coordinate action and shape solutions directly. Community groups weren't just consulted - they became decision-makers on the PSB working group itself. The prototyping approach meant people could test ideas and learn together rather than waiting for external authorities to implement fixed solutions. The PSB have become facilitators who convene stakeholders, build trust, and enable the community and partners to drive change collaboratively.



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This project demonstrates strong alignment with co-production principles, with solid foundations and collaborative ways of working established. Given more time to embed these practices, community influence will deepen across the board. The foundations are there; continuing this trajectory will yield a powerful example of co-production.



Role of the Co-production Network for Wales

As part of our Project Dewi (2021-2026), Co-production Network for Wales consultants supported the PSB through advice and facilitation, to encourage the development of relationships of trust leading to stakeholder and community involvement.

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Links

- [Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Service Board](#)
- [Natural Resources Wales - Newborough information](#)

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Have a good case study example? Get in touch: hello@copronet.wales. For more tools & resources to support your co-production journey, including guidance for working with people in a wide range of settings, visit our website: copronet.wales



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